

Please adapt the following language as needed for your event.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: [Name – *Must be a person who is available to answer questions from the media*]

[Phone Number – *Include cell phone if person is not always available at the office*]

[Email Address]

Sample headline:

**[NAME OF ORGANIZATION] TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL POISON PREVENTION WEEK
EVENT SCHEDULED FOR [NAME OF CITY, COUNTY, STATE]**

[City, State], [Date]—Each year, [State or Community statistic] poisonings are reported in [Name of State or Community]. As part of *National Poison Prevention Week 2009*, [Name of Organization] will host [event] to remind the people of [State or Community] of the dangers of potentially poisonous medicines, when misused, and chemicals. This event will inform the public how poisonings span a lifetime and on the importance of poison proofing our homes and communities.

This event, which will be held on [date, time, and location of the event], will highlight the community's commitment to protecting its residents from potentially harmful poisonings. [Name of Organization] hopes that by uniting [State or Community] in commemoration of *National Poison Prevention Week 2009*, it can decrease the number of people who are involved in poisonings each year, especially poisonings in the home—the most commonly reported place where poisonings occur.

“By educating [State or Community]'s citizens on preventative steps to take against poisonings, we are keeping families safe,” said [Name of Prominent Local Official]. “It is very important that people arm themselves with basic knowledge on poison prevention in the home, such as keeping chemicals and medicines out of the reach of children and carefully reading the labels and dosages on all products. This event sponsored by the [Name of Organization] illustrates the importance of community involvement in poison prevention.” **[NOTE: If your event targets a different audience, such as adults or senior citizens, adjust the quote so that it addresses the appropriate age group.]**

More than 2 million poisonings are reported each year to the 61 Poison Centers across the United States. According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, approximately 90 percent of poisonings happen at home, and over 50 percent of poisoning exposures involve children under the age of 6. The majority of fatal poisonings occur among adults, especially older adults.

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Since 1961, the third week in March has been designated *National Poison Prevention Week*, focusing national attention on the dangers of poisonings and how to prevent them. Established by the U.S. Congress, *National Poison Prevention Week* is commissioned by the *National Poison Prevention Week Council*, an organization made up of public and private partners who are committed to reducing unintentional poisonings and promoting poison prevention. This year's *National Poison Prevention Week* is March 15 – 21, 2009 and the themes are "Children Act Fast, So Do Poisons," and "Poisoning Spans a Lifetime." To learn more about ways to help prevent poisonings, visit PoisonHelp.hrsa.gov. The Poison Help Web site provides valuable resources for poison prevention. In case of an emergency, individuals can contact the Poison Help number, 1-800-222-1222.

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About Poison Help

Poison Help is a national campaign designed to educate Americans about Poison Centers, poison prevention and the national toll-free number to access the nation's 61 Poison Centers. The Poison Help Web site provides resources for individuals, health care professionals, and organizations, and can be used to help with poison prevention activities. The Web site also provides a poison prevention center locator, to help individuals quickly and easily locate the nearest poison prevention center. The Poison Help number, 1-800-222-1222, will connect you to the Poison Center serving your region.

About HRSA

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) funds the national Poison Help hotline (1-800-222-1222) to reach the Nation's 61 Poison Centers, provides funding support to the Poison Centers, promotes the Poison Help hotline, and promotes *National Poison Prevention Week*. HRSA is the primary Federal agency for improving access to health care services for people who are uninsured, isolated, or medically vulnerable. HRSA provides national leadership, program resources and services needed to improve access to culturally competent, quality health care.

